

Lakes in the
High Uintahs



LESSONS FOR NOVEMBER, 1958 Compiled by KATE B. CARTER
DAUGHTERS OF UTAH PIONEERS

*The beavers declare the glory of God;
and the firmanent sheweth his handiwork.
Psalms 19:1*

Utah Lakes

NUMEROUS people from all over the world have wondered why the Mormon pioneers chose the Valley of the Great Salt Lake as a permanent home, realizing that the Great Salt Lake and its salty marshes covered a large area which seemingly would make the land unproductive. But theirs was an inspired choice for in the high mountains and surrounding country were thousands of fresh water lakes which would bring life-giving water to make their lands yield abundant harvests.

The Great Salt Lake is only a remnant of its predecessor, Lake Bonneville, which in ancient times covered an area ten times as great as the present lake. At its highest level Lake Bonneville spread over 12,640,000 acres, which included many of the most fertile valleys in Utah. It was 346 miles long, 140 miles wide and reached a depth of 1050 feet.

The shoreline of Lake Bonneville formed a pattern of bays, peninsulas and estuaries. Most of the present islands of the lake were submerged and many of the mountains were surrounded by water. The main body of the lake was in the present Salt Lake Valley, Tooele and Rush valleys and the Great Salt Desert. To the south extended Utah Bay which is now Utah Lake. Other bays extended west and south, the most important of which is the site of the now dry Sevier Lake. Escalante Bay extended within fifty miles of the Utah-Arizona line and, in the northeast, Cache Bay extended itself into the present day Cache Valley. It was through this bay that Lake Bonneville found its outlet through Red Rock Pass into the Snake River, thence into the Columbia, and on to the Pacific Ocean.

It is said that James Bridget, famous Rocky Mountain trapper, was the first man to have actually seen the waters of Great Salt Lake.

LAKES IN THE HIGH UINTAHS

All of the forested upper Duchesne County area lying on the south slopes of the Uinta mountains is known as a "Primitive Wonderland." Practically untouched by roads or trails, this great forested fishing and camping area is as primeval as it was when early trappers roamed its areas. As part of the Wasatch National Forest, it will always be kept that way. The High Uintas were set aside by Act of Congress as a permanent Primitive Area, during the Administration of President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, and is accessible only by foot or horseback. The area contains 244,000 acres of mountains, timber, lakes and streams.

Within this great Wilderness Wonderland, are thousands of lakes of various sizes, all of which are fresh-water lakes fed by melting snow and abounding with trout.

The better-known lakes are Mirror and Moon Lakes, Granddaddy lakes, Mohawk, Governor Dern, Pine Island, Palisade, Clement, Kidney, Island Lake, Brown Duck Lake, Give Point Lake, Drift Lake, Bluebell Lake, Superior Lake, Miller Lake, Deer Lake, Farmers Lake, Twin Potts Reservoir, Lake Atwood, Upper Chain Lake, Fox Lake and others. These high lakes are all at an altitude of 10,000 feet and higher. Several dude ranches offer guided tours into this rich wilderness for the hardy vacationer who enjoys the grandeur of unspoiled mountain beauty and snow-capped peaks, and bald mountains which are above the timber line, onyx blue lakes, frothy white streams and emerald green forests.

These lakes are known as Fisherman's Paradise, and Duchesne County is the gateway to the High Uinta Mountains, the only major range of mountains in the Western Hemisphere which run east and

P 207

replied substantially as follows: "Over there you will find the granddaddy of them all" and from this remark, the name "Granddaddy" was applied to this 140 acre lake. It is located in Section 4, T 2 N, R 8 W, USM.

Rainbow, 4. Governor's, 5. Pinto. Located in Sections 16 and 21, T 3 N, R 8 W, were all named at the time Governor George H. Dern and party made the trip into the area in 1930. At that time Pinto Lake was named for a horse which was part of their pack string. Governor's Lake was named in honor of former Governor George Dern and Rainbow Lake was named because of a reflection of a rainbow in the lake.

the United (500 feet).

water for need irrigate projects the Moon natural lakes off of the men of the and built water to h is about irrigation started in

ting in the ated a little

ort distance time been dick

34, T 4 N, num depth because of

at this, the e area was up of sur- and an ex- area and he

Pine Island Lake. Located in Section 20, T 3 N, R 8 W, USM, is named because of the five islands within the lake, all of which are covered with pine trees.

Washington Lake. Located in Section 6, T 2 S, R 9 E, Salt Lake Meridian; named after the Father of our Country. This is a reservoir lake.

Trial Lake. Located in Section 5 of the T 2 S, R 9 E. This lake has been erroneously spelled Tyrol and Tryol but the spelling is "Trial." It is named for the fact that it was the first lake that was reservoirized in this area and it was conducted as a trial method of holding water in the high country.

Wall Lake. Located in T 1 S, R 9 E, Sections 30 and 31, SLM. This is probably the deepest lake in the area, having a measured depth of 90 feet. It is named for the fact that it rests against high ledges or "walls." This is a reservoir lake.

The lakes in the "Naturalist Basin" located in T 4 N, R 8 W, USM, are generally named after well-known naturalists, including David Starr Jordan, Walcott, LeConte, Faxon, Shaler, Hyatt, Everman, Morat; other lakes named after scientists would include Scudder, Milder, Wyman, Packard.

There are three lakes located in T 3 N, R 9 W, USM, Sections 2 and 11, called the Hoover Lakes. Hoover Lake was named after former President Herbert Hoover and Shepherd Lake and Marshall Lake were named after former Forest Supervisors.

Allen Lake. Located in Section 14, T 3 N, R 8 W, was named after Floyd L. Allen, a former District Ranger who was killed by lightning while on duty in August, 1938.

Powell Lake. Located in Section 27, T 3 N, R 8 W, USM, was named after Major John Wesley Powell, of the U. S. Colorado River Exploration Survey. Inf. Wasatch National Forest Ranger District.

Five Point Lake is located near the headwaters of the west fork of Yellowstone River. It covers an area of fifty-five acres lying at about timber line and at an elevation of 11,000 feet. This lake is surrounded by high meadows and rough, rocky canyon walls in the distance. Smith Fork lies to the northeast and Porcupine Pass to the northwest. Kings Peak lies to the east with an elevation of 13,498, but is not visible from the lake because of a low divide running north and south dividing the east and west forks of the Yellowstone. From this lake it is possible to look east at Kings Peak and within a few minutes anyone so desiring can be climbing its heights. The lake is surrounded by small clumps of spruce and with grassy meadows in between this site is an excellent camping location.

About twenty years ago the lake was stocked with fish and has been stocked regularly ever since. This was done by carrying them in on pack horse from the canyon forks at Swift Creek and Yellowstone. Recently some stocking was done by plane. About fifteen years ago the lake was reservoirized to store water to be used for irrigation purposes in the valley below the forest boundary. Approximately half the water from the lake is drawn off in the late season. This beautiful body of water can be reached from the road end at the junction of the Yellowstone and Swift Creek by pack horse or on foot.

—Clyde Lambert

Most of the lakes in the high Uintas occur west of Ashley Canyon and originated as a result of glaciation of the western or high half of the range. They were formed largely in two ways: By scouring of the bedrock by the advancing ice to the bottom and sides of which were frozen masses of boulders and sand collected as the ice moved along. This scouring action produced depressions in the rock over which the ice passed. Water accumulated in these depressions forming lakes. In many places there are large concentrations of lakes (tarns) where the snow and ice accumulations are called catchment basins or cirques, and as the ice began moving from these basins into the valleys along the slopes of the Uintas, the greatest number of tarns were formed. They often outline or nearly cover these areas.

As the ice streams moved down the valleys, particularly small side valleys in the main ones, masses of sand and boulder debris dropped by the melting ice dammed portions of the valley floors here and there. Water accumulated behind these morainal deposits forming a second type of lake.

Some peculiar feature of the lake apparently determined many of their names, for example Fish Lake, Mirror Lake, Deadman, Hoop, Brown Duck, Twin, Red, Lamb, Crescent, Squaw, etc. Others were named for individuals such as Reader, Hacking, Workman, Kabell, Atwood. The latter was undoubtedly named for W. W. Atwood, the geologist who made a study of the glaciation of the Uintas. Green Lake was named for a Doctor Green who built a resort there about 1915.—Hilda Morgan

Spirit Lake was so named according to "Our Strip of Land," a history of Daggett county written by Dick and Vivian Dunham, because of the following Indian legend as told by Jim Lamb.

A group of Shoshone bucks went off on a little hunting party up in the Ballies. One of them was following an elk trail, and along toward dusk, he came to a big lake surrounded by pines. He decided he'd better spend the night there, and go on hunting in the morning. He wrapped up in his blanket at the foot of a pine and went to sleep.

All of a sudden, a noise woke him up. It sounded like a bell ringing, deep and sort of muffled. The moon had just come up, and

was slipping along behind some clouds, and the lake was all sort of misty. He got up and looked out at the water where the sound seemed to come from. There, down under the black surface of the lake, he saw a herd of white elk moving along. The leader was wearing the bell that gave off that solemn, muffled note.

Terrified, the Indian plunged off through the woods, not looking or caring where he was going. Two or three days later the rest of his party found him. He was still pretty much out of his mind from fear of what he'd seen. After he'd been fed and rested a bit, he managed to tell his companions what he'd seen. The poor chap was never quite right in his mind after that. The other Indians recognized the lake from his description, and named it *Spirit Lake*. The Shoshones always gave it a wide berth, especially at night time.

Nobody else has ever seen those white elk, as far as we know; but if you listen on a still summer night, you can sometimes hear that muffled bell ringing, way down under the surface of the lake.

There are numerous lakes in the Uinta Mountains. Dagget county has 15 large lakes and 90 miles of fishing streams from which fishermen take 125,000 cutthroat, Montana grayling, eastern brook, rainbow, white fish and catfish annually.—Gene L. Kubns

SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

The lakes and streams of southeastern Idaho are not so large and impressive as those in the northern part, but they are lovely withal. Some of their excellence may be attributed to the majesty imparted by the surrounding terrain. In the southeast corner, Idaho shares the beautiful blue of Bear Lake with Utah. Its name was suggested by its shape which has dimensions of eight by twenty-two miles. There are excellent beaches and recreational facilities along the eastern shore.

Eighteen miles northeast in Bloomington Canyon lies lovely *Bloomington Lake*, sheltered by huge cliffs. The lake covers twelve acres and is sustained by deep springs of clear cold water.

Grays Lake is a sheet of water of enchanting beauty which nestles among the peaks of the Caribou Range. Here the mountain wilderness prevails amidst a fullness of nature's beauty and freshness. In the extreme northeastern corner, near the Montana boundary, lies *Henry's Lake*. This is a magnificent body of water two miles wide and five miles long. It washes low, grassy shores, and yet lies within a thousand feet of the Rocky Mountain summit. The lake is dotted with islands and "indented by graceful tongues of land rich in foliage." Twelve miles away intriguing Mt. Sawtelle rises in its majestic resemblance of a sleeping Indian chieftain.

Ten miles northwest of Henrys Lake is *Cliff Lake*, a remarkably pleasant lake three by one-half miles in size. The depth is said to be phenomenal, and vertical basaltic cliffs practically surround the lake. This locality is one of surpassing beauty, a fitting approach to the world's wonderland, Yellowstone National Park.

—*History of Southeastern Idaho*

A MOUNTAIN LAKE AT DAWN

It is hard to describe—this lake in the Wasatch. Its beauty works a spell upon the beholder. It is a sort of romance told by Nature in water and granite—lovely as the lake of a dream. With ledge upon ledge, tier above tier, the mountain encircles the water, bearing aloft the cloud-like groves of pine and aspen; until far above they fall for nourishment among the wilderness of the violet-gray crags—the last great waves of granite leaping upward to the skies. Over the ledges a stream from the heights comes falling, its plaintive voice half smothered on cushions of moss. From the clear deep lake a rocky island emerges and from its every fissure fantastic spruce and cedars grow and fling their arms abroad. Sheltered by an overhanging wall of granite and strewn with wreckage from the pines above lies a pallid snow bank, fading in the summer's heated glow, weeping drop by drop into the lake's translucent depths.

Over the risen peaks the wandering clouds have passed, and in the darkness of night poured down their stored floods. Now Nature wears a peaceful smile; in tranced quiet within its mighty basin sleeps the lake seeming at rest forever. No rude breath of wind to mar the pictured image of the shore. Among the trees the light of the pearly dawn begins to steal, inlaying the grassy forest floor with delicate mosaic and checkering the thick-crowded pillars with alternate light and shade. Gracious on slender stems the stately columbines press their satin flowers close to the rough-barked trunks and scented branches of the pines.

"Here silence reigns, and naught there is to mock

The far-off murmur of the mountain rill,

As if a voice in solemn accents breathed

O'er the lone lake, and scathed rock, Be still!"

Alfred Lambourne

